

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 TRSE-00 HA-05 MCT-01 CU-04 IO-13 /094 W
-----104953 040320Z /61

R 031445Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY CAPE TOWN
TO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
SECSTATE WASHDC 6868
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAPE TOWN 415

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS, WA
SUBJ: NAMIBIA : ABDUCTION OF OVAMBO PUPILS

REF: CAPE TOWN 343

1. ON MARCH 1, ANGLICAN VICAR GENERAL ED MORROW GAVE VISITING EMBOFF HIS VERSION OF THE DEPARTURE TO ANGOLA OF PUPILS FROM THE ANGLICAN MISSION SCHOOL AT ODIBO. ACCORDING TO MORROW, WHO VISITED ODIBO SHORTLY AFTER THE INCIDENT, 240 OUT OF 300 STUDENTS, AGED FROM 10 TO 20, WERE NO LONGR AT THE SCHOOL. ONE OF THE SCHOOL'S FIFTEEN TEACHERS HAD ALSO DEPARTED.

2. MORROW BELIEVES THAT THE EXODUS WAS PLANNED BY THE STUDENTS AT THE SCHOOL. THIS, HE SAID, IS SUPPORTED BY PARENTS OF BOARDING STUDENTS HAVING RECEIVED LETTERS FROM THEIR CHILDREN SUGGESTING THAT THEY WOULD SOON BE LEAVING THE COUNTRY. ACCORDING TO MORROW, THE SECURITY
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POLICE HAD INFO THAT THE STUDENTS WERE PLANNING TO FLEE, BUT WERE CAUGHT OFF GUARD ON THE SPECIFIC DATE. THE EXODUS ITSELF BEGAN ON THE EVENING OF FEB 21, WHEN A SMALL GROUP OF STUDENTS ENCOUNTERED SWAPO GUERRILLAS NEAR THE MISSION AND ASKED TO BE TAKEN TO ANGOLA. THEY INFORMED THE GUERRILLAS THAT MANY MORE STUDENTS ALSO WISHED TO LEAVE, AND RETURNED TO THE

MISSION WITH THE GUERRILLAS TO COLLECT THEM.

3. MORROW BELIEVES THAT THE LARGE MAJORITY OF THE PUPILS LEFT FOR ANGOLA VOLUNTARILY, ALTHOUGH HE DOES NOT DOUBT THAT SOME MAY HAVE BEEN PERSUADED OR COERCED. HE ADDED THAT HE RECEIVES ALMOST DAILY REPORTS FROM OVAMBO OF YOUNG PEOPLE FLEEING TO ANGOLA.

4. AS REPORTED REFTTEL, MORROW IS AN AVID SWAPO SUPPORTER AND IT IS NOT SURPRISING THAT HIS VERSION OF THE INCIDENT SHOULD EXCULPATE SWAPO. MOST OTHER OBSERVERS AND POLITICAL LEADERS IN WINDHOEK, ALTHOUGH FURTHER REMOVED FROM THE SITUATION THAT MORROW, CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT THE STUDENTS WERE ABDUCTED. BOWDLER

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Message Attributes

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Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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